The guidelines in this brochure, which were developed by the UMass Lowell Counseling Center, are intended to help all members of the UMass Lowell community respond wisely, consistently and promptly in situations where there is cause for concern about the well-being of a student.

Adapted from materials produced by the UMass Boston’s Safety Planning Committee
1 Gather Information

If a student tells you he or she is personally troubled about another student, and one or more of the following warning signs are present …

**Psychological or physical signs, such as …**
- Extreme emotionality, intent to harm or kill oneself or others
- Withdrawal, isolation, absence of emotion
- Confusion or inability to make decisions
- Odd or bizarre speech/behavior
- Change in concentration/motivation
- Excessive fatigue, falling asleep in class
- Change in hygiene, appearance or weight

**Academic signs, such as …**
- Inappropriate behavior
- Deterioration in quality of work
- Assignments with theses of despair, hopelessness, intense anger
- Missed/late assignments
- Missed appointments
- Repeated absences
- Decreased engagement in

Go to step 2.

2 Assess the Level of Distress

**If the situation is urgent, call Campus Police at 2911 or 978.934.2911**

Situations are considered urgent when a student is at immediate risk of harming self or others, or is incoherent or unresponsive.

Stay with the student to provide support for both student and the on-scene officers, unless you fear for your own safety.

If the situation is important but not urgent—if the student does not appear to be in acute and current distress but has been showing signs listed in Step 1 …

Go to Step 3.

3 Assess Your Relationship With the Student

If you don’t know the student, or are unable to deal with the student directly, contact the Dean of Students Office: 978.934.2107

If you know the student and feel you have the experience, ability and time to deal with the student and determine what assistance may be needed:

**Before the conversation:**
- Ask the student to meet privately
- Let someone know about the meeting (best scheduled during business hours) so he/she can be available to help

**During the conversation:**
- Let the student know what you have noticed to cause concern ("I’ve noticed you’ve missed class 3 times in the past 2 weeks")
- Do not promise to keep information confidential
- Ask open-ended questions
- Listen to the student’s response. You need not be scared by an emotional response. Talking about a problem or crisis is the first step toward resolving it.
- Suggest a visit to Center for Learning 978.934.2936 (North)/2941 (South), Counseling (4331), Health Services (4991) or Student Disability Services (4574).
- If the student agrees to go, accompany them to the appropriate office or call the campus resource to let them know to expect the student and indicate whether an appointment should be made or if the student should be seen right away